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**Congresswoman Matsui Statement on House Republicans Once Again Blocking Authorization of Critical Flood Protection Projects**

*Republican leadership of House Rules Committee blocked amendment to Sandy relief bill that would have positioned Congress as proactive; authorized pending flood protection projects, including Natomas' levee improvements*

**WASHINGTON, DC** – Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-06) released the following statement after the Republican leadership of the House Rules Committee announced they were not allowing debate on her amendment to the Hurricane Sandy relief bill, H.R. 152, the Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013. The decision effectively blocks an up or down vote on Congresswoman Matsui amendment. Congresswoman Matsui's amendment would have authorized a limited number of pending flood risk reduction projects that have completed vigorous federal review that has resulted in an Army Corps of Engineers Chief's Report, including much needed improvements to Natomas' levees. Of the nearly 100 amendments submitted to the Sandy Relief bill, members of the House will only vote on 12 of them.

"I am extremely disappointed that the Republican leadership of the House Rules Committee has blocked my amendment that would seek to prevent future flood disasters from the Sandy relief bill. It is time for Congress to be proactive about ensuring our levees are strong and can prevent major flood events. Speaker Boehner should let the House work its will and allow debate and vote on my amendment.

"Hurricane Sandy, like Katrina before it, reminded us that a major flood disaster could strike at any moment and devastate an area in both human and financial terms. The amendment I offered would have allowed the Army Corps of Engineers to move forward on a limited number

of critical flood protection projects that the Chief of Engineers has already submitted a report to Congress for indicating they are in our nation's best interest.

"The Natomas Levee Improvement Project (NLIP), one of the projects that would have been authorized under the amendment, is critical to improving flood protection in the Sacramento region. Natomas' levees protect thousands of Sacramento residents and billions of dollars of property and infrastructure. The Corps of Engineers estimates that a flood in Natomas would cause \$7 billion dollars of damages.

"I strongly support the Hurricane Sandy relief bill. Assisting our fellow Americans in their time of need is a national necessity and should be our top priority, as should be the prevention of future natural disasters. We cannot stop the storms from happening, but we can protect ourselves from the floods that follow. My amendment provided an opportunity for Congress to be proactive and demonstrate its commitment to America's public safety needs. I am disappointed that House Republicans have once again demonstrated a complete disregard for our nation's critical flood protection projects.

"Despite the action by the Rules Committee, I remain optimistic that Congress can and will authorize, fund and complete the much needed levee improvements in Natomas. There is simply too much at stake."

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